

Bishop's Stortford Baptist Church (BSBC)

Training Policy

1. Introduction

BSBC recognises that its staff, with their commitment, skills and abilities are a very valuable resource of the organisation. Volunteers are also of tremendous value and many are in key positions. BSBC is keen to help staff and key volunteers develop and to bridge through training any gaps in knowledge and skill that are required to assist BSBC achieve its objectives.

Training should be of value both to BSBC and the individual. It should be work or role orientated and have a discernible benefit for both in the foreseeable future: for example, it may be concerned with the development of specific skills or gaining information directly related to the role. It may also be concerned with the development of individual confidence, interpersonal skills and background understanding relevant to the tasks of an organisation such as BSBC.

2. Assessing training need

The individual should discuss their training needs with her or her team leader and agree what training is appropriate. All staff and key volunteers should be meeting regularly with their team leader and the discussion of training requirements should form part of these sessions. Also, these discussions should consider the operational requirements of BSBC. The approval of the Church Officers should be sought.

As a result of these discussions and the requirements of BSBC's objectives, a Training Plan may be needed in order to feed into a training budget.

Where course fees are particularly expensive or attendance on the course involves a heavy commitment of time, factors which will be taken into account in deciding whether to give or withhold approval are the financial situation, the workload which would require to be covered and whether the course in question is essential to the work of the individual and the needs of BSBC.

Special consideration will be given within the context of BSBC Equal Opportunities Policy to those who require the development of particular skills to allow them to undertake their role effectively. A record will be kept of training undertaken by individuals. All staff and key volunteers should have access to the training and development required of them to fulfil their roles.

3. Short courses

Within the parameters set out above, BSBC will allow paid staff time off work and cover the full costs of attending short courses.

The need for, and proposals for, training can be raised by any individual. Where appropriate the approval of the Chair and/or Trustees should be sought for the arrangements for meeting the needs identified.

Individuals may also raise proposals for training for the organisation as a whole e.g. exclusively for or involving Trustees. A report may be made to the Chair and/or Trustees as appropriate.

4. Conferences

Attendances at conferences may be a normal and essential part of an individual's work, but at times it may also be more properly considered as a development experience for the individual concerned. Either way, attendance at conferences should be discussed with the individual's team leader and the approval of the Church officers sought.

5. Training as part of normal work

"Training" does not mean only attendance on formal courses. It should be a conscious part of normal work. In particular it is the responsibility of team leaders, as part of the support they give to individuals, to assist them to improve their skill and understanding, to reflect on Church events and to learn from experience.

(Note: For paid staff, attendance at agreed work-related training, courses and conferences during evenings/weekends will be compensated by equal time off in lieu).

6. Longer courses for staff - study leave/assistance with the costs of study

BSBC recognises that some courses, especially those leading to formal qualifications, require a longer commitment of time and that the costs of study may represent a considerable financial burden to the individual. BSBC wishes to be able to assist staff to undertake relevant courses of study. Such a commitment, however, has to be balanced against BSBC's limited staff and financial resources. The following procedures therefore will apply:

The course of study should be of value both to BSBC and to the individual. It should be work-orientated and have a discernible benefit for both sides in the foreseeable future.

Individuals thinking of asking for study leave and /or assistance with the costs of study should first discuss their intention with their team leader.

Formal requests for study leave /or assistance with the costs of study should be made to the Church Officers who shall consider the request and make a recommendation to the Trustees as appropriate.

In determining whether or not to recommend/agree a request for study leave and/or assistance with the cost of study, the Trustees will take into account:

- The relevance of the intended course to the work of BSBC
- The possibility of arrangements to cover for absences involved
- The financial situation

In a situation of competing demands against limited staff cover/financial resources BSBC will weight decisions on study leave and/or assistance with the costs of study towards relatively less well qualified staff and staff who have been with BSBC for a considerable period.

With regard to the costs of study, BSBC will consider covering all the fees or a proportion of them, and making a contribution to the costs of books, residential sessions etc. The Church Officers will recommend to the Trustees what is a relevant contribution in the light of the circumstances of each case.

The Trustees may decide to attach conditions to assistance given, for example, continuance of financial assistance being contingent BSBC being satisfied that the staff member is showing satisfactory progress in his or her studies and is able to sit for an examination within a reasonable period of time etc.

In addition, certain training may be made dependent on agreement to a training contract that requires repayment of costs should the staff member leave employment. Such arrangements would be discussed and agreed in writing with the staff member in advance.

Where repayment of financial assistance is required this shall not include salary paid in respect of time spent on the agreed course of study.

Team leaders will use subsequent supervision sessions to review the impact of any training and development.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Staff supervision
- Recruitment and selection

This policy was adopted by the Trustees on 9th September 2019 and will be reviewed every three years.